

Original entry:

604 Kingstown Road, corner Columbia Street, Peace Dale Office Building (1856/c.1908): This oblong, 3-story, granite-rubble building was one of the Rowland Hazard II's first designs (see #37E). Designed to accommodate the company store, mill offices, the local library association, and a meeting hall, the building originally had a low gable roof with broad eaves. The original 1856 storefront (modified with plate-glass windows) exists on the Columbia Street side of the building. The Post Office storefront on the east elevation as well as the present hipped roof and ornamental balcony on the south end are all early twentieth-century alterations which transformed this ponderous early Victorian block into something a bit more refined and faintly Federal Revival. In addition to the Post Office, the building houses a shop, offices, room used by the Neighborhood Guild (#96) and the Museum of Primitive Culture. The top-floor meeting hall was eliminated after its function was taken over by the Hazard memorial Hall (#38).
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Additional documentation, Peace Dale Office Building
Listed in the National Register as 604, now 1058, Kingstown Road, South Kingstown

The building retains one remarkable interior space, a second-floor gallery that houses and displays the collections of the Museum of Primitive Art and Culture. Rowland G. Hazard II (1855-1918) was an enthusiastic collector of prehistoric artifacts. His acquisitions, gathered over a lifetime through extensive travel and business contacts, formed the core of the museum's collection. The Hazard collections were first lodged in the Peace Dale Library (across the street), but in 1929 Hazard's widow Mary commissioned a permanent home for the museum in the Peace Dale Office Building.

Perry, Hepburn, and Shaw of Boston designed the changes to the structure. At the east end of the building, the ceiling of the second floor was removed, creating a 2-story gallery space, 24X40.' The gallery was fitted out in the Mission style, with heavy beams and vigas, rough plaster walls, and a red tile floor. Some of the windows were covered or converted to small, round-head or quatrefoil openings. The walls were built out to create deep window reveals to simulate thick adobe walls, and heavy window surrounds were installed on the remaining rectangular openings. The gallery is lined with dark wood and glass cases for display of artifacts. The chandeliers are heavy wrought iron; the gallery is entered through an iron-studded, heavy, panelled double door. This is an unusually intact interior--few changes have been made since 1930 and many of the furnishings remain as installed then.

